DP

UNITED
NATIONS

Governing Council
of the
United Nations
Development Programme

Distr.
LIMITED

DP/1993/SCPM/L.1
17 February 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME
MATTERS
Special session
16-19 February 1993
Item 6 of the agenda of the
Standing Committee

DRAFT REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME MATTERS ON ITS IN-SESSIONAL MEETING HELD DURING THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL, 16-19 FEBRUARY 1993

Rapporteur: Mr. Thomas STELZER (Austria)

I. OPENING OF THE MEETING, ELECTION OF THE RAPPORTEUR, ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. The Standing Committee for Programme Matters held an in-sessional meeting during the special session of the Governing Council convened in New York from 16 to 19 February 1993. The Vice-President of the Governing Council, H.E. Dr. Oscar Serrate Cuellar (Bolivia), served as Chairman of the Committee. Mr. Thomas Stelzer (Austria) was elected Rapporteur.

2. At its first meeting on 16 February 1993, the Standing Committee adopted its agenda and tentative schedule of work contained in document DP/1993/L.1. The Standing Committee also agreed to maintain a flexible schedule of work.

III. COUNTRY AND INTERCOUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

A. Africa

1. Country programme approvals

Zimbabwe

1. The Deputy Resident Representative presented the third country programme for Zimbabwe for the period 1993 to 1996 with a net IPF of $18.4 million. The thrust of the new country programme was to support the Government's economic reform programme, concentrating on three key areas: economic management, income generation and environment. He noted that a long-term perspective study was expected to be launched in the early stages of country programme implementation.

2. The Representative of the Government of Zimbabwe expressed his gratitude to UNDP for its support to the development of his country since independence. He stated that the third country programme differed both in its focus and implementation modality from the previous country programme and emphasized the Government's commitment to the national execution modality for capacity-building. He was appreciative of the catalytic role of UNDP and made specific mention of a national seminar on environment organized by UNDP. He underlined that the country programme was directly related to the Government's economic reform programme.

3. Nine representatives commented on the country programme. The concentration in three key areas where UNDP had comparative advantages was commended. The effectiveness of the UNDP office in Harare was also commended by several speakers. Clarification of the UNDP role in implementation and monitoring the economic reform programme was sought and it was observed that UNDP assistance should go beyond the study of public enterprises to support for privatization. Two delegations noted with concern that only 4 per cent of the IPF had been proposed as support for work on the environment. Another noted that HIV/AIDS, although a major problem, was not included as an area for assistance. The target from national execution was considered to be highly ambitious and the lack of indicators of programme would make monitoring and assessment difficult. Delegations also noted that UNDP should play a more active role in aid coordination.

4. The representative of the Government of Zimbabwe replied to questions raised, noting the constraints to privatization but emphasizing the wish of the Government to see ownership in the hands of nationals and to achieve full national execution of the country programme. The Deputy Resident Representative pointed out that non-IPF resources were expected to finance activities in the field of environment but would not target tourism, as proposed by one delegation. The World Bank was contributing substantially to the national programme on AIDS. Efforts were under way to improve United Nations coordination. Indicators of progress, while implicit in the document,

would be elaborated during the development of subprogrammes and projects to facilitate evaluation.

5. The Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the third country programme for Zimbabwe.

Ethiopia

6. The Resident Representative presented the fifth country programme for Ethiopia (DP/CP/ETH/5), which had a net IPF of $146.3 million for the period 1993-1997. Support to activities in six areas was proposed: increased food production; food security and nutrition; improvement of the resource-population-sustainability balance; capacity-building in human resource development in both the public and private sectors; disaster-preparedness, prevention and mitigation; management of economic and technical change in both the public and private sectors; and economic recovery and reconstruction. He emphasized that the new country programme would be reviewed at the beginning of 1994 following national elections and the installation of a new Government.

7. The Representative of Ethiopia provided background on political developments and the economic situation in the country, emphasizing the extensive demobilization of soldiers, the transition to a market economy and the progressive laws and reforms introduced. He noted the importance of reviewing the country programme in 1994 in light of developments under the new regime. He indicated that aid coordination was the responsibility of the Government but that there was need for more coordination of the United Nations system and within UNDP - in the latter, particularly for addressing transborder issues such as drought.

8. Eight other delegations commented on the country programme. They observed that the links among the six areas of concentration were not clear nor had environmental issues been addressed sufficiently. One delegation felt that the programme encompassed too many areas of activity. UNDP should concentrate on areas where it had a comparative advantage and experience, particularly in capacity-building, poverty alleviation, and in support of the programme for management of the economy and technical change. One delegation proposed that UNDP should assist in developing cross-sectoral policies and programmes since sectoral activities had received considerable attention. Support by UNDP for elections and for Eritrea were not mentioned in the document and delegates sought further information in that regard. The forthright assessment of the fourth programme was commended. One delegation called for greater prioritization and attention to lessons learned from implementing the previous country programme and called for increased efforts for integrating activities of the United Nations system while another delegation commended the United Nations for its coordination efforts at the field level. The need for finding a balance between relief and longer-term development assistance was stressed and the need to review the programme in

early 1994 was underlined. It was noted that more resource mobilization was critical for the success of the programme.

9. In reply to questions, the Assistant Administrator emphasized that considerable attention was being given to improving coordination both in the United Nations system and within UNDP. She noted that $6 million from the IPF for Ethiopia had been earmarked for Eritrea, with the agreement of the Government of Ethiopia, should Eritrea elect for statehood, and that in the meantime UNDP was maintaining its liaison office in Asmara.

10. The Resident Representative replied that efforts would be made to associate other United Nations agencies, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and bilateral donors with the preparation of programme frameworks for the country programme and assured the Committee that links between programmes would be further detailed. The important issues of environment and gender would be incorporated as integral parts of the subprogrammes. UNDP assistance would be given to the electoral process and national execution would be sought, relying on implementing agencies in areas where Government capacity was not well developed.

11. The Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the fifth country programme for Ethiopia.

Mauritania

12. The Assistant Administrator and Director, Regional Bureau for Africa introduced the fourth country programme for Mauritania for the period 1993-1996. It had a net IPF of $17.2 million and identified two areas of concentration: (a) rural development and (b) human resources and poverty alleviation. It took into account the priorities for technical cooperation outlined in the Government's programme for economic consolidation and growth, which remained valid. In addition to the IPF, the Joint Consultative Group on Policies agencies would provide $47 million and other UNDP-administered funds were expected to contribute up to $27.1 million.

13. The Representative of Mauritania expressed his Government's appreciation to UNDP and called for approval of the country programme, which was highly relevant for the country's development.

14. One delegation commented that the areas of concentration represented high priorities for the country; another said the objectives were imprecise and did not entirely reflect what had already been accomplished in the country, for example, in the development of the infrastructure. The need for balance between urban and rural development programmes was emphasized along with the need for close collaboration among donors, for which UNDP played an important role.

15. The Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the fourth country programme for Mauritania.